

*Findings from*

**A SURVEY OF  
EMPLOYEES OF THE  
CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MD**

*Conducted June and July, 2003*

*(Published January 2004)*

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A SURVEY OF EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MD  
CONDUCTED JUNE & JULY, 2003**

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**FINDINGS FROM  
A SURVEY OF EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MD  
CONDUCTED JUNE & JULY, 2003**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A survey of employees of the City of Takoma was authorized by the City Manager, Richard M. Finn, and Deputy City Manager, Wayne Hobbs. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain how well things have been going in the workplace for employees since the signing of the Resolution Agreement between the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs and the City of Takoma Park on July 2, 2001.

The survey, which was in the form of a questionnaire, was conducted during June and July, 2003, by Dr. Harriett G. Jenkins, EEO Consultant, and Karen Hampton, Personnel Coordinator and EEO Representative. The questionnaire, which covered seven areas delineated below, was administered to employees in department groupings; and 119 employees participated (representing 77% of the 155 employees who were employed as of June 30, 2003).

**Survey Findings**

**1. Training**

Large majorities of the employees were able to identify specific training experiences that they felt had enhanced their job effectiveness, and some indicated training experiences that would help prepare them for higher level job assignments. Most of the employees cited an array of positive insights they had gleaned from the diversity training; an additional number indicated that they were well experienced in working with and respecting multi-cultural groups; and a few employees felt the training was not enlightening or helpful.

**2. Work performance relationships with one's supervisor**

Two thirds of the employees who responded to the questions indicated their supervisors had met with them to establish their workplans for the year. Three fourths felt their supervisors had provided proper guidance to them during the work year. More than three fourths of the employees who responded to the questions felt they could take their issues and concerns to their supervisors and discuss those concerns freely and satisfactorily.

**3. The workforce environment**

In this section of the questionnaire, the employees were given ten descriptive phrases, and were asked to mark any one or more that applied to their respective workplaces. The top three descriptive phrases that were selected most often were: *"A place where I am a desired and contributing member of the team"* (selected by 61 employees); *"A place where I feel respected*

*and appreciated for what I contribute” (56); and “A pleasant place to work, with high morale” (52). Nineteen employees felt their workplaces were “Hostile and intimidating.”*

#### **4. Work and performance relationships with one’s co-workers who are of a different racial, ethnic, or gender group than the employee**

Similarly, for this question seven descriptive statements were provided, and the employees were asked to circle or underline any one or more that applied to their relationships with their co-workers. The statement chosen most by 106 employees was, *“I am comfortable and work well with each of the persons of my work group who is of a different racial, ethnic, or gender group than I am.”*

#### **5. Concerns, issues, or complaints**

More than four-fifths of the employees who responded to this question indicated that they had been able to bring their concerns, issues or complaints to the proper person and have them resolved appropriately. They indicated they could bring the matter to the person involved, or to their supervisors, or to the EEO Consultant, or to a senior manager and have the matter resolved, handled or adjudicated in a timely manner, and not be harassed or retaliated against because of bringing it up.

#### **6. Changes in managerial behaviors**

The majority of employees responding to these questions felt that the changes they had noticed since the signing of the DOJ Agreement in 2001 had been positive. Amongst the examples cited were increased awareness of issues of diversity and positive steps taken to address real or perceived issues and problems.

#### **7. Any other comments the employee wished to make that would be helpful to the survey and to improving the future workplace of Takoma Park employees**

The employees were asked for their comments and suggestions for improvements at the end of each of the previous six sections, and they were invited to do so again in this question. Examples of employee comments are delineated within each of the six sections of the body of this report; and employee suggestions are grouped by topic area in the seventh section.

### **Conclusion**

The majority of City of Takoma Park employees like their jobs and feel that steps are being taken to achieve a well-performing multi-cultural team of public servants. They acknowledge some improvements have been made in the work environment; and they have suggestions for additional improvements. The City Manager and Deputy City Manager confirm that their numerous initiatives have had a positive impact; and they plan to make what has been learned a core value of the way the organization works. Hopefully the survey results will be carefully reviewed and discussed among city management, department heads, and employees. The ultimate goal would be enhanced and committed service to the Takoma Park citizenry.

**FINDINGS FROM  
A SURVEY OF EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MD  
CONDUCTED JUNE & JULY, 2003**

**INTRODUCTION**

The City Manager, Richard M. Finn, and Deputy City Manager, Wayne Hobbs, of the City of Takoma Park, MD, authorized a survey of city employees, which was to be conducted during the months of June and July, 2003. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain how well things have been going in the workplace for employees during the last two fiscal years (since the signing of the Resolution Agreement between the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs and the City of Takoma Park on July 2, 2001).

The survey was in the form of a questionnaire which was devised by the EEO Consultant and administered to department groups by the EEO Consultant, Dr. Harriett G. Jenkins, and the Personnel Coordinator and EEO Representative, Karen Hampton. The questionnaire covered the following seven areas:

1. Training
2. Work performance relationships with one's supervisor
3. The workforce environment
4. Work and performance relationships with one's co-workers who are of a different racial, ethnic, or gender group than the employee
5. Concerns, issues, or complaints
6. Changes in managerial behaviors
7. Any other comments the employee wished to make that would be helpful to the survey and to improving the future workplace of Takoma Park employees

A substantial majority of all of the employees in each city department participated in the survey. Of the 155 employees who worked for the City of Takoma Park as of June 30, 2003, 119, or 77%, participated in the questionnaire survey. Of the 56 who indicated the number of years they had been employed by the city, 10, or 18%, said they had worked for less than 2 years; 14, or 25%, indicated from 2 to 5 years; and 32, or 57%, said they had worked for Takoma Park for more than 5 years.

The total number of employees per department, and the number and percent of the employees who responded to the survey are shown by majority/minority group and gender in Chart I which follows:

**Chart I**  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES BY DEPARTMENT,**  
**WITH SURVEY PARTICIPANTS SHOWN IN ITALICS BY**  
**MAJORITY/MINORITY GROUPS AND GENDER**

Departments		White		Black		Hispanic/Asian/ Other		Totals
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
<b>Administration</b>								
	No. Employees	2	4	2	3	2	2	15
	No. / % Survey Participants		<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>12</i> <i>80%</i>
<b>Finance</b>								
	No. Employees		4					4
	No. / % Survey Participants		<i>4</i>					<i>4</i> <i>100%</i>
<b>Housing &amp; Community Dev</b>								
	No. Employees	2	2	3	4			11
	No. / % Survey Participants	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>11</i> <i>100%</i>
<b>Library</b>								
	No. Employees	2	10	1				13
	No. / % Survey Participants	<i>2</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>1</i>				<i>10</i> <i>77%</i>
<b>Public Works</b>								
	No. Employees	5	2	22	2		1	32
	No. / % Survey Participants	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>1</i>	<i>25</i> <i>78%</i>
<b>Recreation</b>								
	No. Employees	3	2	8	8	1		22
	No. / % Survey Participants	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>		<i>11*</i> <i>50%</i>
<b>Police</b>								
	No. Sworn Officers	17	5	8	3	6		39 <i>100%</i>
	No. / % Survey Participants	<i>14</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>		<i>31</i> <i>79%</i>
	No. Non-Sworn Admin. Staff		6	1	10		2	19
	No. / % Survey Participants		<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>9</i>		<i>1</i>	<i>15</i> <i>79%</i>
<b>Totals</b>								
	No. Employees	31	35	45	30	9	5	155
	No. / % Survey Participants	<i>25</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>119</i> <i>77%</i>

\* Some employees were unable to take the survey because of other employment or school obligations.

At the end of 6 of the 7 sections in the survey questionnaire, the employee was invited to submit comments or suggestions about how the particular subject area of the section could be improved. Some of those comments are reflected under the particular question where they were made, while the suggestions for improvement are amalgamated by subject area under Question 7.

The findings, comments, and the suggestions for improvement from the questionnaire survey were all reviewed carefully and discussed with and among Department Heads and staffs. It is planned that, based upon their criticality, feasibility, and available resources, priorities will be established for possible future action and periodic assessment.

## **SURVEY FINDINGS**

The responses of the employees in each of the seven questionnaire areas are delineated and assessed in this report. Where there appear to be differences among departments, those are so noted. For the purposes of submitting the required annual report to the U.S. Department of Justice, the Police Department employees' data were broken down by sworn officers and non-sworn administrative staff. On occasion in this report, where relevant, those distinctions are also noted.

### **1. Training**

The employees were asked to list the most effective training experiences they had received during the last two fiscal years that enhanced their effectiveness as Takoma Park employees. Of 119 employees from all city departments who participated in the survey, 91, or 76%, named 153 training experiences that they felt had enhanced their job effectiveness. Among the numerous kinds of training identified, the training experiences named most frequently were those related to:

- Customer Service
- Diversity
- In-service, on-the-job, or seminars related to one's job and daily duties

Some 70 employees, or 59% of the 119 total employees, identified 57 training experiences that they felt would help prepare them for higher level job assignments.

One question in the survey specifically asked employees in what ways the diversity training they had received broadened their awareness, respect, and appreciation of other races and cultures. Of 119 employees participating in the survey, 80, or 67%, responded to the question. Of the 80 employees who responded, 55, or 69%, cited an array of positive and constructive insights they had gleaned from the diversity training. Some examples of those comments are summarized below:

- It has helped me work well with people different from myself.
- It made me more aware of the sensitivities of co-workers, and of individuals' attitudes toward racial tension and misunderstandings, and how others may look at things differently than I do.
- The training was important because other people were learning how to respect and appreciate my race and my background.
- It increased my recognition of differences in backgrounds, approaches to tasks, communication preferences, sensitivities, and mannerisms, and enhanced my respect for "individualism" and its role in the "whole."
- It increased my awareness of the sensitivities of co-workers.
- Learning about ASL enhanced my appreciation of the deaf community.
- I was reminded that all races have many talents.
- It confirmed that I should treat others the way I would like to be treated.
- It taught me to watch my words in any communication, and see things through the eyes of the recipient, not just my intended meaning.
- I have a better understanding of the variety of cultures that exist where I work and how certain cultures react differently, interpret things differently, or are scared of authority figures, or just may not understand.
- It broadened my understanding of 'perception' and how powerful a tool it is for people regardless of the fact that it may not be factual.

An additional 14 employees, or 18%, indicated they were already well experienced in respecting multi-cultural groups and were well aware of what was covered in the diversity training sessions:

- I was raised in a multicultural environment, so it was nothing new to me. I have an open mind.
- I have attended numerous diversity trainings over the years and keep an open mind during training but don't get much out of them because I feel I always treat everyone with respect.
- It did not broaden me further. I was already well aware of what was mentioned.
- Other college classes and training sessions I have taken were more advanced than those offered by the City so these haven't accomplished much.



Seven employees, or 9%, felt the training did not broaden their awareness, respect, or appreciation of other races and cultures, with most of these last feelings being expressed by minority and non-minority sworn officers of the Police Department.

- It introduced me to employees from other departments that I might not have otherwise met, but otherwise it was not particularly enlightening.
- I have very little respect for the training we received. Things haven't changed much.
- It was a waste of time.

Employees were given the opportunity to comment or make suggestions for improving any of the types of training they had received. Some 48 of the 119 employees, or 40%, commented or made such suggestions. Some of those suggestions for improvement are summarized in Question 7 under Training.

## **2. Work performance relationships with one's supervisor**

Of the 119 employees from all city departments who participated in the survey, 108 employees, or 91%, responded to the question about whether they could take their issues and concerns to their supervisors. Of that number, 84, or 78%, indicated they felt they could take their issues and concerns to their supervisors and discuss those concerns freely and satisfactorily. This was indicated by a majority of both minority and non-minority employees in most of the seven departments.

Within the Police Department, a majority of sworn officers and a majority of non-sworn administrative staff also indicated they felt they could take issues or concerns they may have to their supervisors and discuss those items freely and satisfactorily. However there were some differences between what minority and non-minority groups felt. Almost all of the non-minority sworn officers indicated they felt they could take their issues or concerns to their supervisors. But only half of the minority sworn officers felt that way, and the other half felt they could not take their concerns to their supervisors and discuss them satisfactorily. Among the non-sworn administrative staff, the reverse was true. Most of the minority employees felt they could take their concerns to their supervisors; while half of the non-minority administrative staff felt they could, and half felt they could not raise their issues satisfactorily with their supervisors.

A total of 104 employees from all city departments responded to the question about the supervisory guidance they had received. Of that number, 78, or 75%, indicated their supervisors had provided appropriate guidance to them for the work year. Within the Police Department, majorities of both sworn officers and non-sworn administrative staff also said their supervisors had provided appropriate guidance to them during the work year. This was confirmed by most of the minority sworn officers and administrative staff, and also by most

of the non-minority sworn officers and administrative staff. However, within the Public Works Department, a majority of minority employees felt they were not provided appropriate guidance during the work year.

Employees were given an opportunity to indicate whether their supervisors had met with them to establish their workplans for the year. Of the 111 persons from all city departments who responded to this item, 74, or 67%, indicated their supervisors had met with them. This was true for minorities and non-minorities. When the data were assessed by department, however, this trend was different for the Police Department. A large majority of sworn officers and almost half of the administrative support staff indicated in their responses that their supervisors had not met with them to establish the employees' work plans for the year. This was true for minority and non-minority employees of both sworn officers and non-sworn administrative staff. The City Manager, Deputy City Manager and Chief of Police each have indicated that this particular problem is being worked on and will be resolved.

Of 87 employees who responded to the question about their overall performance ratings for the year, 24, or 30% indicated they had received ratings of "Distinguished," and 58, or 67%, received "Acceptable" ratings.

Employees were invited to make suggestions about how their relationships with their supervisors might be improved. Of the 62 employees who did so, 20, or 32%, indicated they have good or excellent relationships with their supervisors; that their supervisors are supportive and encouraging; and the employees had no suggestions for improvement. Some 43 employees, or 69% of the 62 employees, however, did take the opportunity to make suggestions for improvements. Many of those are summarized in Question 7 under Work Performance Relationships with One's Supervisor.

Interestingly, within the Police Department, almost half (47%) of the non-minority sworn officers indicated they had good relations with their supervisors; however, almost all of the minority sworn officers as well as almost all of both the minority and non-minority unsworn administrative staff indicated their relationships with their supervisors need improvement.

### **3. The workforce environment**

For this section of the questionnaire, employees were given 10 descriptive options, and were asked to circle or underline any one or all of those that applied to their respective workplaces. The descriptive phrases which were selected are shown in descending order below in Chart II:

## Chart II

### DESCRIPTIVE PHRASES OF THE EMPLOYEES' WORKPLACES

Descriptive Phrase	No. times selected
<i>A place where I am a desired and contributing member of the team</i>	61
<i>A place where I feel respected and appreciated for what I contribute</i>	56
<i>A pleasant place to work, with high morale</i>	52
<i>I would like to work here until I retire</i>	36
<i>Discipline is applied equitably regardless of who the person is</i>	28
<i>Promotions are based on merit, experience, knowledge and performance</i>	26
<i>Hostile and intimidating</i>	19
<i>Other</i>	17
<i>Too many inappropriate racial and ethnic comments</i>	1
<i>Too many inappropriate sexual jokes</i>	0

It should be noted that a number of persons who are included in the “number of times selected” column above chose to modify their selections to more accurately describe what they felt about their workplaces. Some of those modifications follow:

- “*A pleasant place to work, with high morale,*” was modified by a phrase saying that morale was only “moderate or low,” or they rewrote the phrase with no reference to morale.
- “*A place where I am desired . . .*” and “*A place where I feel respected . . .*” were modified with “sometimes,” or “sometimes in small ways,” or “in part,” or “in part among my colleagues in the department only, not within the city context as a whole.”
- One person who chose “*Hostile and intimidating,*” altered it by saying that the workplace was “hostile and frustrating.”
- “*Too many inappropriate racial . . . comments*” was amended to “too many inappropriate comments.”

Additionally, employees were given an opportunity to write in “other” descriptions of their workplaces, and 32 of the employees chose to do so. The comments reflect a variety of areas in which employees thought improvements in the workplace could occur. Some of those descriptions are summarized below:

- My workplace is okay.

- A pleasant place to work but I feel I do not get paid for the job that I do.
- People in our department often feel undervalued or overlooked by administration.
- It's who the boss likes . . . there are still many groups or clicks . . . you are in or out.
- A pleasant place to work in general, with some reservations about administrative policies.
- Discipline is (or is not) applied equitably regardless of who the person is.
- Low morale, the shifts are too long.
- Unfair promotions are taking place . . . and supervisors smile in your face and stab you in the back.
- The workplace is becoming better, but still has room for improvement.

In general, there were not significant differences between departments nor between minority and non-minority employees. Most of the employees in each department who selected the descriptive phrases, chose the most positive phrases to describe their workplace; and while some pointed out areas that still could be improved, even some of those comments indicated that their work situations have gotten better.

Employees were given an opportunity to offer their comments or suggestions about how their work environments might be improved. Some 56 employees did so, and many of their remarks replicated comments they had made to earlier questions about their relationship with their supervisors and their work environments. Some of their suggestions for improvement are included in Question 7 under the Workforce Environment.

#### **4. Work and performance relationships with one's co-workers who are of a different racial, ethnic, or gender group than the employee**

This questionnaire segment also consisted of descriptive phrases – seven total. The responders could circle or underline any one or all of those that applied to their respective relationships with their co-workers who were of a different racial, ethnic, or gender group from themselves. The phrases that were marked are listed below in Chart III in descending order of the number of times they were selected.

### Chart III

#### DESCRIPTIONS OF THE EMPLOYEES' WORK AND PERFORMANCE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CO-WORKERS DIFFERENT FROM THEMSELVES

Descriptive Statement	No. times selected
<i>I am comfortable and work well with each of the persons of my work group who is of a different racial, ethnic, or gender group than I am.</i>	106
<i>Women and male co-workers would confirm that I do not make inappropriate jokes or sexual remarks.</i>	82
<i>African Americans in my work unit would confirm that I respect and work well with them.</i>	77
<i>Hispanics in my work unit would confirm that I respect and work well with them.</i>	70
<i>I have had disagreements with one or more co-workers who were of a different group than I am, but we were able to resolve the dispute.</i>	33
<i>There are some members of groups different from my own with whom I do not work very well, but I get along well with other members of those same groups.</i>	16
<i>I am still somewhat uncomfortable with persons of various cultural, ethnic, racial, or gender groups that are different from my own.</i>	3

One of the employees added the following description to the list: “*European Americans in my work unit would confirm that I respect and work well with them.*”

A number of employees indicated that they have no problems with their co-workers; or they get along well with diverse groups; or they can think of no way to improve those relations. Some employees, however, did make the following observations, and their suggestions for improving relationships between co-workers can be found in Question 7 under “Work and Performance Relationships with One’s Co-Workers.”

- No one should be unwilling to carry his/her own weight or to help others when needed.
- Some coworkers, no matter what, don’t want to get along with others.
- There is always room for improvement, communication in an open and honest way usually works.
- We have come a long way since 1999.

## **5. Concerns, issues, or complaints**

Employees were further queried about whether they had been able to bring their concerns, issues, or complaints to the proper persons and have them resolved appropriately. Of 85 persons who responded to this question, 71, or 84%, indicated they had been able to bring the matter to the person involved, or to their supervisors, or to the EEO Consultant, or to a senior manager and have the matter handled or adjudicated in a timely matter, and not be harassed or retaliated against because of bringing it up.

A majority of the minorities who responded to this question, as well as a majority of the non-minorities who responded indicated they had been able to accomplish this. This was true for most of the responders from each of the seven departments. Fourteen responders (16%) in four departments, including the police department (6 sworn officers plus 2 non-sworn administrative support staff) indicated they have not been able to do so.

Among the comments and suggestions made by the employees concerning this issue were some that ranged from not having any problems; or when they have a problem, they talk directly to the person involved; or if they had a problem they feel comfortable taking it to one of the key persons named; or they talk to other trusted advisors; or their problems were adjudicated. Other comments about this question and concerns or issues that may need to be addressed:

- Some employees do have problems but are afraid to say anything because the person in charge will not listen, and there most likely will be retaliation.
- Nothing really seems to get done or taken seriously except for complaints involving EEO or racial complaints.
- The issues were never resolved for me after I took them to my supervisor.
- I covered all the issues with the appropriate people but couldn't get the right answer.
- I think the current system is working well and see a great improvement.

Thus, the vast majority of employees in all City of Takoma Park Departments felt they are or would be able to carry their issues and concerns to appropriate persons, and get them resolved effectively and fairly without retaliation against them for bringing up the concern. A small group 14, or 16%, do not feel so, or when they have come forward have not felt that what happened to them was very useful. Some suggestions about this area can be found in Question 7 under Concerns, Issues, or Complaints.

## **6. Changes in managerial behaviors**

Responders were also given an opportunity to indicate whether they had noticed or experienced changes in the behaviors of the Heads of their Departments, the City Manager and the Deputy City Manager since the signing of the DOJ Agreement in 2001. It should be noted that 4 of the 7 Department Heads were not in their current positions in 2001. This suggests that the employees' comments in those departments are probably reflecting recent trends in their work environment during the last year or so, rather than a change in the Department Head's behavior when compared with pre-2001.

At any rate, of the 119 responders, 66 (55%) noted changes in the managerial behavior of their Department Heads; and the majority of those (45 of the 66, or 68%) explicitly noted that the changes have been positive. Some of the comments made about the behavior of Department Heads and the Chief of Police are summarized below:

- Everyone is more aware of all issues of diversity and discrimination, and positive steps have been taken to rectify real and/or perceived problems.
- As a supervisor, I make it a point to initiate discussions ("check-ups") on issues related to diversity and EEO when meeting with employees.
- People are really "walking on eggshells" (being careful) in a strange way. They know that "maybe someone is watching."
- The Department Head is open to new suggestions and ideas in a more timely fashion.
- There is a completely new Command Staff with a better attitude toward employees and their problems.
- Race must be factored into decision making because of a fear of more unwarranted complaints.
- Any type of complaint is being aggressively investigated.
- The Chief is open and willing not only to discuss issues, but hopefully resolve issues.

Fewer responders commented on changed behaviors of the City Manager and the Deputy City Manager, with some employees indicating that they don't work with those two individuals or see them and therefore don't have the opportunity to observe them very often. Of the 119 responders, 63 (53%) commented on changes in the behavior of the City Manager; and the majority of those (37 of the 63 or 59%) indicated the changes were positive. Some of the statements made about the behavior of the City Manager are summarized below:

- Everyone is more aware of all issues of diversity and discrimination, and positive steps have been taken to rectify real and/or perceived problems.
- He has made a clear statement to the organization about expectations/philosophy as related to diversity and EEO. This has been supported by training and supervisors have been charged with facilitating diversity sessions within departments.
- He has taken the agreement to heart and is devoting his time, staff time, and money to working on these issues.
- While he seems sincere in his efforts to affect changes in the workforce regarding diversity, in reality there is a lack of decision makers of color.
- There is a conscious effort to hire minority applicants, and to increase Spanish language skills of employees.
- He is searching for new ways to improve the work environment.
- He has made a genuine attempt to become acquainted with staff.
- Under the new workplan model, supervisory positions appear to be more likely to receive “distinguished” status, perhaps showing a bias in the workplan and/or rating system. This should be examined and altered.
- The evaluation process was negative because completed evaluations were sat on for months at a time and some have never gotten back.
- I haven’t noticed any changes, positive or negative.
- No changes have been noted, but his behavior has been quite acceptable. He is still approachable and helpful.

Of the 119 responders, 57 (48%) commented on changes in behavior related to the Deputy City Manager; and the majority of those (32 of the 57 or 56%) thought the changes were positive. Some comments made about the behavior of the Deputy City Manager are summarized below:

- Everyone is more aware of all issues of diversity and discrimination and have taken positive steps to rectify real and/or perceived problems.
- He has supported and facilitated the objectives of the City Manager.
- While he seems sincere in his efforts to affect changes in the workforce regarding diversity, in reality there is a lack of decision makers of color.



- He is more accessible and available to hear staff concerns and answer questions.
- I believe he has learned to be more appreciative of the diversity process.
- No change noted. He is still approachable and helpful.
- He seems the same . . . he talks a little, and seems cordial.
- He seems like he does not want to be bothered with anything unless directed by the City Manager.
- I have always thought of him as a fair man.
- He is more open.

In summary, most of the employees who responded to this question felt the changes that they had noted in the behaviors of their senior managers were positive and contributed to an improved work environment.

The Chief of Police, City Manager and Deputy City Manager were each interviewed by the EEO Consultant and EEO Representative team. These senior managers were asked about what changes they had noted since the signing of the DOJ Agreement. These managers in their responses confirmed many of the changes identified by employees above in this survey report.

The Chief of Police feels that certain steps she has taken have helped contribute to an improved work environment in the Police Department. Cited among these actions is her open door communication policy. She has opened up her Command Staff Meetings and Individual Division Meetings to any persons in the Police Department who wish to attend (except for the portions of the meetings reserved for personnel and other sensitive issues). Individual meetings between the employee and his or her immediate supervisor are to be held monthly to review the employee's progress towards established goals and objectives. Also, the Chief has opened up the announcement of training opportunities so employees can apply if they qualify for the training. The Chief feels that her open door policy has encouraged a number of employees to come and talk to her about their issues and concerns; that morale has improved in the department; and that she is committed to improving the performance management and evaluation process.

The City Manager cites numerous changes that have occurred since the signing of the DOJ Agreement. These include but are not limited to the sustained training in diversity that occurred over a two year period. He has established administrative policies and has held Department Heads and other staff accountable for having a workplace free of discrimination, harassment or retaliation against employees; and he has taken disciplinary actions where needed. He has pressed and supported positive changes in various departments of the city to improve their effectiveness, including changes in personnel. He feels work-based relationships are expanding across race, ethnic, and gender lines; and he notes that employee

events now reflect more enthusiastic attendance and more mixed groups coming together. He also cites the New Employee Orientation, which now includes a tour of Takoma Park, and Customer Service Training as examples of changes that have been very positively received by the participants.

The City Manager's priorities for the future include taking what they have done and learned during the two years and making it a core value of the way the organization works. He is encouraging his Department Heads, when they take in new people, to really ensure during the probation period that the new employees are going to fit into the core values of the city's mission plan.

The Deputy City Manager says they have always had a high emphasis on training; but he also cites the development of the strategic plan and the two years of diversity training as being a pivotal part of the positive changes during the last two years. He feels the leadership training provided to Department Heads and Supervisors has helped improve relationships between employees and their supervisors significantly. He cites that performance management and evaluation has been an on-going project, getting a lot of emphasis from the City Manager on down, and that they have modified the plan after receiving feedback.

The Deputy has an opportunity to work, not only with the Department Heads, but also with persons below that level on projects and issues within the city, and with union negotiations which can be stressful. He has noted some changes in some people and the way they do their work, and feels that morale has improved among city employees.

**7. Any other comments the employee wished to make that would be helpful to the survey and to improving the future workplace of Takoma Park employees**

Only a small number of the employees took the opportunity to respond to this question. Of the 119 employees who took the survey, only 32, or 27%, offered comments under this section of the questionnaire that might be helpful to the survey or in improving the future workplace of Takoma Park employees. Nevertheless, the responses of the employees who did respond to this question were quite varied, and many echo statements shared in their responses to earlier questions.

Consequently, some of the suggestions for improvement made by employees under each of the 7 areas of the questionnaire are shown below by those areas:

*a. Training*

Some of the following suggestions came from the 48 of 119 employees (40%) who responded to this question:

- Offer training more often (i.e., to improve current job skills; for career advancement; for specific needs such as computer skills; to address supervisory and management issues, etc.).
- Some training should be longer, more in depth, and more interactive (i.e., diversity, sexual harassment prevention, and equality, with supervisory and management accountability; Mid-East cultures and religion, etc.).
- Have more consistent & professional human relations training (i.e., on communication & team building, etc.)
- Continue use of practical exercises & case studies.
- I'm happy with what is being offered.
- Strive to obtain the best trainers possible.
- Make provisions in training courses for non-speakers of English.
- Have training sessions more interactive with management so cooperation is nurtured rather than confrontation.
- Provide more specific details about city's expectations and recommendations for implementation of adopted policies.
- Schedule training for minimum impact on work schedules.
- Provide training for smaller groups at work site . . . it might be better.
- Provide a training agenda and timeline so everyone will know the procedures and expectations and ensure equality of training.
- Offer more training for Captain, Sergeant and Corporal positions, as well as executive level law enforcement.
- Ensure that a broad and diverse array of employees get to participate in the best training.
- Obtain EEO Instructors who are impartial or neutral.
- Continue to strive for increased training budgets so more employees can participate.
- In addition to a periodic survey such as this, the round table discussions during training sessions are good.

*b. Work Performance Relationships with One's Supervisor*

Some 43 of 119 employees, or 36%, made suggestions for improvements, and some of those are summarized below:

- Supervisors should be well trained and knowledgeable about what they are doing, and should have a desire and interest in having all of her or his employees succeed.
- Supervisors should have good people skills, especially communicative ones, genuinely interested in what an employee is doing, and willing to listen with an open mind, and not with the conclusions upon which he or she has already decided.
- Supervisors need to set aside time to meet with employees, both in groups and individually, so that items such as information about projects, tasks, or problems, as well as performance expectations can be discussed.
- Supervisors should not be rude, nor show favoritism among employees.

*c. The Workforce Environment*

Employees were given an opportunity to offer their comments or suggestions about how their work environments might be improved. Some 56 of 119 employees (or 47%) did so, and many of their remarks replicated comments they had made to earlier questions about their relationship with their supervisors and their work environments. Some of the comments or suggestions that were different from earlier responses are summarized here:

- Managers need training on listening to and respecting other's ideas, on how to encourage innovation, and on how to stop having a double standard.
- The City Manager and Deputy City Manager have to show that they are honest and sincere about keeping and rewarding good employees.
- Provide opportunities for more communication and cooperation between departments.
- When you have a lot of complaints from different people about a person making a hostile workplace, look into or investigate the situation and resolve it.
- Hold people accountable for following the rules.
- Put less emphasis on diversity improvement, and more on overall treatment of employees.

- We should share more and learn from our mistakes, instead of trying to hide from them.
- Employ higher caliber people.
- People in positions of authority (including city council members) should speak to all employees.
- I think the office is a pleasant place to work and that morale is increasing.

Some suggestions from employees which were directed at improving the workforce environment of the Police Department are listed below:

- The Police Department is a pleasant place to work, but we should continue working to raise morale and to increase the credibility of the Police Department.
- Continue open communication among staff at all levels.
- Ensure that all workers are informed about job openings.
- Work to reduce the perception of favoritism toward certain officers in reference to training opportunities, complaints being swept under the rug, etc. . . .
- Continue using the matrix for discipline.
- Apply discipline and promotions equitably based on merit, whether minority or non-minority.
- Get better role-models as sergeants who are well rounded in other areas of law enforcement other than patrol.
- Hold supervisors accountable for performing as they are supposed to.
- More personnel are needed . . . have some of the Brass pitch in on the work load instead of keep passing it down the chain.
- The Chief needs to realize what's going on. More sick leave is being used. Employees love their jobs but hate their place of work. Promotions are only for Command Staff and patrol. Civilians are stuck in dead end jobs.
- Those who are not team members should move to other jobs.
- Members should take responsibility for their own actions and gossip and spread rumors less than they do.

- The single biggest issue I have with minority officers is their unwillingness to accept responsibility for their actions. A mistake is not the end of the world. I wish they would accept responsibility for a mistake, apologize, make corrections, and move on.
- Ensure that employees get their evaluations in a timely manner.
- Over all I think the Department is progressing well. I think the biggest downfall is the current evaluation system. This impacts the entire Department and affects morale. I am pleased with the progress and feel that working relationships between everyone have improved a great deal.

d. Work Performance Relationships with One's Co-Workers

A number of employees indicated that they have no problems with their co-workers; or they get along well with diverse groups; or they can think of no way to improve those relations. Some employees, however, did make the following suggestions for improving relationships between co-workers:

- Continue atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Relationships among co-workers would improve if each person demonstrated respect for each other person, and if employees would offer solutions to the complaints they have.
- Encourage co-workers to recognize employee's efforts; and promote staff prior to hiring from outside.
- Working together on projects is important, so that we can find common ground and understand each other better.
- Have systems in place that reward people fairly for their work. Treat everyone the same. Be cognizant of things that you do or say that may be misinterpreted by others.
- Everyone should be held accountable for the same rules and in the same manner; and stricter supervision over supervisors would help with fairness because some supervisors follow the rules and some don't.

e. Concerns, Issues, or Complaints

A small group of 14, or 12% of 119 employees, did not feel that, when they had come forward with their concerns, issues or complaints, what happened to them was very useful. Some suggestions about improving this area were:

- Work to build more trust and confidentiality in the various processes for addressing concerns, issues or complaints.
- Resolve issues and concerns expeditiously and fairly, provide feedback, and help the employee understand why he/she may not have obtained the answer he/she wanted.

f. *Other Suggestions for Improving the Future Workplace*

Some of employees' comments or suggestions for improving their future workplaces are summarized below:

- All managers and supervisors need to have more hands on experience in order to give an honest evaluation of how a job is to be done and the right amount of time needed for the job.
- I have no problem getting along with co-workers and prefer that we are not all the same race and background.
- Although the City government operates as a non-partisan entity, with this year's war and political changes (state/federal), office talk regarding politics has increased and some employees are not comfortable within their work environment when these discussions arise.
- I believe the continued presence of the EEO Consultant and the regular meetings and training sessions have shown a commitment to diversity by senior management and have made the topic more comfortable for workers. The quality of training and process has been greatly improved – which I appreciate.
- I think it is an uphill battle to change someone's negative feeling into a positive one. Management will probably have to work long and hard for that to happen.
- I think the City and its Departments still need to work harder at making the agency reflect the demographics of the community. Although this agency is trying to make changes, we still need to have more minority representation in department heads, management, and supervisory roles.
- I think positive signs of change have occurred but I keep hearing signs from some that things have not improved. Recent talk by a select few minorities is that they still believe they are targets of unfair treatment. Find ways to hear and look at those complaints.
- I am pleased that someone is working to make sure all persons are made to feel a part of Takoma Park as they pursue their careers.

- Good survey! I hope it is discussed with the people who need to know why subordinates feel the way we do, no matter what race we/they may be.

The above responses, as well as others earlier in the report depict the wide variety of employee perceptions of the work environment. They reflect areas of satisfaction with their workplaces but also the concerns that are held by some City of Takoma Park employees.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is concluded from this survey that the majority of City of Takoma Park employees like their jobs. They feel that steps are being taken to achieve a well-performing multi-cultural team of public servants. They acknowledge some improvements have been made in the work environment; and they have many suggestions about ways additional improvements can be attained. The City Manager and Deputy City Manager concur that there have been positive impacts from the numerous initiatives they have implemented. They plan to take what has been learned and make it a core value of the way the organization works.

It is recommended that the results of this survey be carefully reviewed, discussed among city management, department heads, and employees in the coming months ahead. Minimally, the department and team discussions might help determine which ideas and suggestions from this survey merit future attention and possible actions. The major objective of such discussions would be to direct the employees' visions and goals toward the future, rather than rehashing and dwelling on what has occurred in the past. It might help employees address and focus on each individual employee's obligation to help operate the city, and how this in turn meshes with the vision and the commitment of the City of Takoma Park to its citizens.